

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Edited by AUSTIN HARRISON

APRIL 1912

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The Lonely Idol	Lord Dunsany
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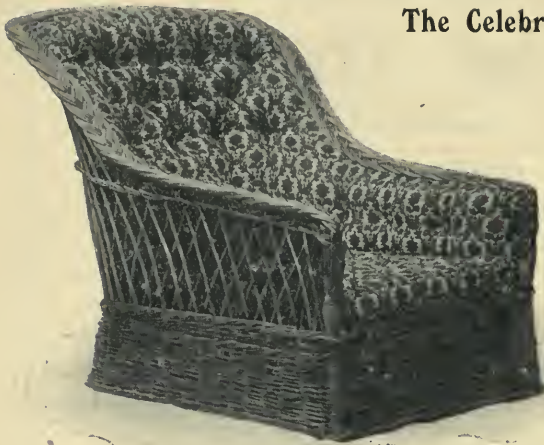
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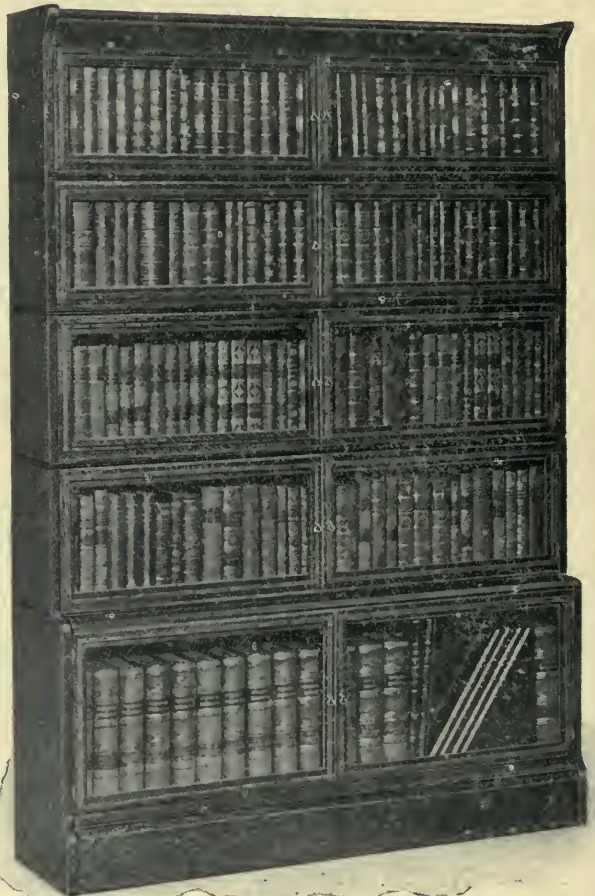
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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

APRIL 1912

Hypsipyle

By Maurice Hewlett

QUEEN of the shadows, Maid and Wife,
Twifold in essence, as in life,
The lamp of Death, the star of Birth,
Half cradled and half mourned by Earth,
By Hell half won, half lost ! aid me
To sing thy fond Hypsipyle,
Thy bosom's mate who, unafraid,
Renounced for thee what part she had
In sun and wind upon the hill,
In dawn about the mere, in still
Woodlands, in kiss of lapping wave,
In laughter, in love—all this she gave !—
And shared thy dream-life, visited
The sunless country of the dead,
There to abide with thee, their Queen,
In that gray region, shadow-seen
By them that cast no shadows, yet
Themselves are shadows. Nor forget,
Koré, her love made manifest
To thee, familiar of her breast
And partner of her whispering mouth.

Thee too, Our Lady of the South,
Uranian Kypris, I invoke,
Regent of starry space, with stroke
Of splendid wing, in whose white wake
Stream those who, filled with thee, forsake

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Their clinging shroudy clots, and rise,
Lover and loved, to thy pure skies,
To thy blue realm! O lady, touch
My lips with rue, for she loved much.

What poet in what cloistered nook,
Indenting in what roll of a book
His rhymes, can voice the tides of love?
Nay, thrilling lark, nay, moaning dove,
The nightingale's full-chargéd throat
That cheereth now, and now doth gloat,
And now recordeth bitter-sweet
Longing, too wise to image it:
These be your minstrels, lovers! Choose
From their winged choir your urgent Muse;
Let her your speechless joys relate
Which men with words sophisticate,
Striving by reasons make appear
To head what heart proclaims so clear
To heart; as if by wit to wis
What mouth to mouth tells in a kiss,
Or in their syllogisms dry
Freeze a swift glance's cogency.
Nay, but the heart's so music-fraught,
Music is all in love, words naught.
One heart's a rote, with music stored
Though mute; but two hearts make a chord
Of piercing music. One alone
Is nothing: two make the full tone.

I

On Enna's uplands, on a lea
Between the mountains and the sea,
Shadowed anon by wandering cloud,
Or flickering wings of birds a-crowd,
And now all golden in the sun,
See Koré, see her maidens run
Hither and thither through those hours
Of dawn among the wide-eyed flowers,
While gentian, crocus, asphodel
(With rosy star in each white bell),

HYPsipyle

Anemone, blood-red with rings
Of paler fire, that plant that swings
A crimson cluster in the wind
They pluck, or sit anon to bind
Of these earth-stars a coronet
For their smooth-tresséd Queen, who yet
Strays with her darling interlaced,
Hypsipyle the grave, the chaste—
Her whose gray shadow-life with his
Who singeth now for ever is.

She, little slim thing, Koré's mate,
Child-faced, gray-eyed, of sober gait,
Of burning mind and passion pent
To image-making, ever went
Where wonned her Mistress ; for those two
By their hearts' grace together grew
The one to need, the one to give
(As women must if they would live,
Who substance win by waste of self
And only spend to hoard their pelf :
" O heart, take all of mine ! " " O heart,
That which thou tak'st of thee is part—
No robbery therefore : mine is thine,
Take then ! ") : so she and Proserpine
Intercommunion'd each bright day,
And when night fell together lay
Cradled in arms, or cheek to cheek
Whispered the darkness out. Thou meek
And gentle vision ! let me tell
Thy beauties o'er I love so well :
Thy sweet low bosom's rise and fall,
Pulsing thy heart's clear madrigal ;
Or how the blue beam from thine eyes
Imageth all love's urgencies ;
Thy lips' frail fragrance, as of flowers
Remembered in penurious hours
Of winter-exile ; of thy brow,
Not written as thy breast of snow
With love's faint charact'ry, for his wing
Leaves not the heart long ! Last I sing
Thy thin quick fingers, in whose pleaching
Lieth all healing, all good teaching—

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Wherewith, touching my discontent,
I know how thou art eloquent !

Remember'd joy, Hypsipyle !
Now may that serve to comfort me,
While I, O Maiden dedicate,
Seek voice for singing thy gray Fate !

Now, as they went, one heart in two,
Brushed to the knees by flowers, by dew
Anointed, by the wind caressed,
By the light kissed on eyes and breast,
'Twas Koré talked ; Hypsipyle
Listened, with eyes far-set, for she
Of speech was frugal, voicing low
And rare her heart's deep underflow—
Content to lie, like fallow sweet
For rain or sun to cherish it,
Or scattered seed substance to find
In her deep-funded, quiet mind.
And thus the Goddess : " Blest art thou,
Hypsipyle, who canst not know
Until the hour strikes what must come
To pass ! But I foresee the doom
And stay to meet it. Even here
The place, and now the hour ! " Then fear
Took her who spake so fearless, cold
Threaded her thronging veins—behold !
A hand on either shoulder stirs
That slim, sweet body close to hers,
And need fires need till, lip with lip,
They seal and sign their fellowship,
While Koré, godhead all forgot,
Clings whispering, " Child, leave me not
When as to darkness and the dead
I go ! " And clear the answer sped
From warm mouth murmuring kiss and cheer,
" Never I leave thee, O my dear ! "
Thereafter stand they beatingly,
Not speaking ; and the hour draws nigh.

And all the land shows passing fair,
Fair the broad sea, the living air,

HYPSSIPYLE

The misty mountain-sides, the lake
Flecked blue and purple ! To forsake
These, and those bright flower-gatherers
Scattered about this land of theirs,
That stoop or run, that kneel to pick,
That cry each other to come quick
And see new treasure, unseen yet !
Remembered joy—ah, how forget !

But mark how all must come to pass
As was foreknowned. In the grass
Whereas the Goddess and her mate
Stood, one and other, prompt for fate ;
Listless the first and heavy-eyed,
Astrain the second ; she espied
That strange white flower, unseen before,
With chalice pale, which thin stalk bore
And swung, as hanging by a hair,
So fine it seemed afloat in air,
Unlinked and wafted for the feast
Of some blest mystic, without priest
Or acolyte to tender it :
Whereto the maid did stoop and fit
Her hand about its silken cup
To close it, that her mouth might sup
The honey-drop within. The bloom
Saw Koré then, and knew her doom
Foretold in it ; and stood in trance
Fixèd and still. No nigromance
Used she, but read the fate it bore
In seedless womb and petals froze.
Chill blew the wind, waiting stood She,
Waiting her mate, Hypsipyle.

Then in clear sky the thunder tolled
Sudden, and all the mountains rolled
The dreadful summons round, and still
Lay all the lands, only the rill
Made tinkling music. Once more drave
Peal upon peal—and lo ! a grave
Yawned in the Earth, and gushing smoke
Belched out, as driven, and hung, and broke

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

With sullen puff ; like tongues the flame
Leapt following. Thence Aidoneüs came,
Swart-bearded king, with iron crown'd,
In iron mailed, his chariot bound
About with iron, holding back
Amain two steeds of glistening black
And eyeballs white-rimmed fearfully,
And nostrils red, and crests flying free ;
Who held them pawing at the verge,
Tossing their spume up, as the surge
Flung high against some seaward bluff.
Nothing he spake, or smooth or gruff,
But drave his errand, gazing down
Upon the Maid, whose blown back gown
Revealed her maiden. Still and proud
Stood she among her nymphs, unbowed
Her comely head, undimmed her eye,
Inseparate her lips and dry,
Facing his challenge of her state,
Neither denying, nor desperate,
Pleading no mercy, seeing none,
Her wild heart masked in face of stone.
But they, her bevy, clustered thick
As huddled sheep, set their eyes quick,
And held each other, hand or waist,
Paling or flushing as fear raced
Thronging their veins—they knew not, they,
The gathered fates that broke this day,

And all the land seemed passing fair
To one who knew, and waited there.

“ Goddess and Maid,” then said the King,
“ Long have I sought this day should bring
An end of torment. Know me thou
God postulant, with whom below
A world awaits her queen, while here
I seek and find one without peer ;
Nor deem her heedless nor unschooled
In what in Heaven is writ and ruled.
Decreed of old my bride-right was,
Decreed thy Mother’s pain and loss,

HYPSIPYLE

Decreed thy loathing, and decreed
That which thou shunnest to be thy need ;
For thou shalt love me, Lady, yet,
Though little liking now, and fret
Of jealous care shall grave thy heart
And draw thee back when time's to part—
If fond Demeter have her will
Against thine own."

The Maid stood still
And guarded watched, and her proud eyes'
Scrutiny bade his own advise
Whether, indeed, their solemn stare
Saw Destiny and read it there
Beyond her suitor, or within
Her own heart heard the message ring.
Awhile she gazed : her stern aspect,
Young and yet fraught with Godhead, checked
Both Him who claimed, and her who'd cling,
And them who wondered. " O great King,"
She said, and mournful was her crying
As when night-winds set pine-trees sighing,
" King of the folk beyond the tide
Of sleep, behold thy chosen bride
Not shunning thee, nor seeking. Take
That which Gods neither mar nor make,
But only They, the Three, who spin
The threads which hem and mesh us in,
Both Gods and men, till she who peers
The longest cuts them with her shears.
Take, take, Aidoneüs, and take her,
My fosterling."

Then He, " O star
Of Earth, O Beacon of my days,
Light of my nights, whose beamy rays
Shall pierce the foggy cerement
Wherein my dead grope and lament
Beyond all loss the loss of light,
Come ! and be pleasant in my sight
This thy beloved. Perchance she too
Shall find a suitor come to woo ;

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

For love men leave not with their bones—
That is the soul's, and half atones
And half makes bitterer their loss,
Remembering what their fortune was.”
Trembling Hypsipyle uplift
Her eyes towards the hills, where swift
The shadows flew, but no more fleet
Than often she with flying feet
And flying raiment, she with these
Her mates, whom now estranged she sees—
As if the shadow-world had spread
About her now, and she was dead—
Her mates no more! cut off by fear
From these two fearless ones. A tear
Welled up and hovered, hung a gem
Upon her eyelid's dusky hem,
As raindrops linked and strung arow
Broider with stars the winter bough.
This was her requiem and farewell
To them, thus rang she her own knell;
Nor more gave she, nor more asked they,
But took and went the fairy way.

For thus with unshed tears made blind
Went she: thus go the fairy kind
Whither fate driveth; not as we
Who fight with it, and deem us free
Therefore, and after pine, or strain
Against our prison bars in vain;
For to them Fate is Lord of Life
And Death, and idle is a strife
With such a master. They not know
Life past, life coming, but life now;
Nor back look they to long, nor forth
To hope, but sup the minute's worth
With draught so quick and keen that each
Moment gives more than we could reach
In all our term of three-score years,
Whereof full score we give to fears
Of losing them, and other score
Dreaming how fill the twenty more.

HYPSIPYLE

Now is the hour, Bride of the Night!
The chariot turns, the great steeds fight
The rocky entry ; flies the dust
Behind the wheels at each fierce thrust
Of giant shoulder, at each lunge
Of giant haunch. Down, down they plunge
Into the dark, with rioting mane,
And the earth's door shuts-to again.
Now fly, ye Oreads, strain your arms,
Let eyes and hair voice your alarms—
Hair blown back, mouths astretch for fear,
Strained eyeballs—cry that Mother dear
Her daughter's rape ; fly like the gale
That down the valleys drives the hail
In scurrying sheets, and lays the corn
Flat, which when man of woman born
Seeth, he bows him to the grass,
Whispering in hush, *The Oreads pass*.
(In shock he knows ye, and in mirth,
Since he is kindred of that earth
Which bore ye in her secret stress,
Images of her loveliness,
To her dear paramour the Wind).
Follow me now that car behind.

II

O ye that know the fairy throng,
And heed their secret under-song,
In flower or leaf's still ecstasy
Of birth and bud their passion see,
In wind or calm, in driving rain
Or frozen snow discern them strain
To utter and to be ; who lie
At dawn in dewy brakes to spy
The rapture of their flying feet—
Follow me now those coursers fleet,
Sucked in their wake, down ruining
Through channelled night, where only sing
The shrill gusts streaming through the hair
Of them who sway and bend them there,

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

And peer in vain with shielded eyes
To rend the dark. Clinging it lies
Thick as wet gossamer that shrouds
October brushwoods, or low clouds
That from the mountain tops roll down
Into the lowland vales, to drown
Men's voices and to choke their breath
And make a silence like to death.
But this was hot and dry; it came
And smote them, like the gush of flame
Fanned in a smithy, that outpours
And floods with fire the open doors.
Downward their course was, swift as flight
Of meteor flaring through the night,
Steady and dreadful, with no sound
Of wheels or hoofs upon the ground,
Nor jolt, nor jar; for once past through
Earth's portals, steeds and chariot flew
On wings invisible and strong
And even-oaring, such as throng
The nights when birds of passage sweep
O'er cities and the folk asleep:
Such was their awful flight. Afar
Showed Hades glimmering like a star
Seen red through fog; and as they sped
To that, the frontiers of the dead
Revealed their sullen leagues and bare,
And sad forms flitting here and there,
Or clustered, waiting who might come
Their empty ways with news of home.
Yet all one course at length must hold,
Or late or soon, and all be tolled
By Charon in his dark-prowed boat.
Thither was swept the chariot
And crossed dry-wheeled the coiling flood
Of Styx, and o'er the willow wood
And slim gray poplars which do hem
The further shore, Hell's diadem—
So by the tower foursquare and great
Where King Aidoneüs keeps his state
And rules his bodyless thralls they stand.

HYPsipyle

Dark ridge and hollow showed the land,
Fold over fold, like waves of soot
Fixed in an anguish of pursuit
For evermore, so far as eye
Could range ; and all was hot and dry
As furnace is which all about
Etna scorcheth in days of drouth,
And showeth dun and sinister
That fair isle linked to main so fair.
Nor tree nor herbage grew, nor sang
Water among the rocks : hard rang
The heel on metal, or on crust
Grew tender, or went soft in dust ;
Neither for beast nor bird nor snake
Was harbourage ; nor could such slake
Their thirst, nor from the bitter heat
Hide, since the sun not furnished it ;
But airless, shadowless and dense
The land lay swooning, dead to sense
Beneath that vault of stuprous black,
Motionless hanging, without wrack
Of cloud to break and pass, nor rent
To hint the blue. Like the foul tent
A foul night makes, it sagged ; for stars
Showed hopeless faces, with two scars
In each, their eyes' immortal woe,
Ever to seek and never know :
In all that still immensity
These only moved—these and the sea,
Which dun and sullen heaved, with surge
And swell unseen, save at the verge
Where fainted off the black to gray
And showed such light as on a day
Of sun's eclipse men tremble at.

Here the dead people moved or sat,
Casting no shadow, hailing none
Boldly ; but in fierce undertone
They plied each other, or on-spied
Their way with signal of the head
For answer, or arms desperate
Flung up, or shrug disconsolate.

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And this the quest of every one :
"What hope have ye?" And answer, "None."
Never passed shadow shadow but
That answer got to question put.
In that they lived, in that, alas!
Lovely and hapless, Thou must pass
Thy days, with this for added lot—
Aching, to nurse things unforget.

Remember'd joy, Hypsipyle!
The Oread choir, the Oread glee :
The nimble air of quickening hills,
The sweet dawn light that floods and fills
The hollowed valleys ; the dawn wind
That bids the world wake, and on blind
Eyelids of sleeping mortals lays
Cool palms that urge them see and praise
The Day-God coming with the sun
To hearten toil! He warned you run
And hide your beauties deep in brake
Of fern or briar, or reed of lake,
Or in wet crevice of the rock,
There to abide until the clock
You reckon by, with shadowy hands,
Lay benediction on the lands
And landsmen, and the eve-jar's croak
Summon ye, lightfoot fairy folk,
To your activity full tide
Over the empty earth and wide.
Here be your food, fair nymph, and coy
Of mortal ken—remember'd joy!

Remember'd joy! Ah, stormy nights,
Ah, the mad revel when wind fights
With wind, and slantwise comes the rain
And shatters at the window-pane
To wake the hind, who little knows
Whose fingers drum those passionate blows,
Nor what swift indwellers of air
Ye be who hide in forms so fair
Your wayward motions, cruel to us,
While lovely, and despiteous!

HYPSIPYLE

Ah, nights of flying scud and rout
When scared the slim young moon rides out
In her lagoon of open sky,
Or older, marks your revelry
As calm and large she oars above
Your drifting lives of ruth or love.
Boon were those nights of dusted gold
And glint of fireflies ! Boon the cold
And witching frost ! All's one, all's one
To thee, whose nights and days go on
Now in one span of changeless dusk
On one earth, crackling like the husk
Of the dropt mast in winter wood :
Remember'd joy—'tis all thy food,
Hypsipyle, to whose fond sprite
I vow my praise while I have light.

Dumbly she wandered there, as pale
With lack of light, with form as frail
As those poor hollow congeners
Whose searching eyes encountered hers,
Petitioning as mute as she
Some grain of hope, where none might be,
Daring not yet to voice their moan
To her whose case was not their own ;
For where they go like breath in a shell
That wails, my love goes quick in Hell.

Alas, for her, the sweet and slim !
Slowly she pines ; her eyes grow dim
With seeking ; her smooth, sudden breasts
Hang languidly ; those little nests
For kisses which her dimples were,
In cheeks graved hollow now by care
Vanish, and sharply thrusts her chin,
And sharp her bones of arm and shin.
Reproach she looks, about, above,
Denied her light, denied her love,
Denied for what she sacrificed,
Doomed to be fruitless agonist.
(O God, and I must see her fade,
Must see and anguish—in my shade !)

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Nor help nor comfort gat she now
From her whose need called forth her vow ;
For close in arms Queen Koré dwelt
In that great tower Aidoneüs built
To cherish her ; deep in his bed,
Loved as the Gods love whom they wed ;
Turned from pale maiden to pale wife,
Pale now with love's insatiate strife
First to appease, and then renew
The wild desire to mingle two
Natures, to long, to seek, to shun,
To have, to give, to make two one
That must be two if they would each
Learn all the lore that love can teach.
So strove the mistress, while the maid
Went alien among the dead,
Unspoken, speaking none, but watched
By them who knew themselves outmatched
By her, translated whole, nor guessed
What miseries gnawed within that breast,
Which could be touched, which could give meat
To babe ; which was not eye-deceit
As theirs, poor phantoms. So went she
Grudged but unscathed beside the sea,
Or sat alone by that sad strand
Nursing her worn cheek in her hand ;
And did not mark, as day on day
Lengthened the arch of changeless gray,
How she was shadowed, how to her
Stretched arms another prisoner ;
Nor knew herself desirable
By any thankless guest of Hell—
Withal each phantom seemed no less
Whole-natured to her heedlessness.

Midway her round of solitude
She used to haunt a dead sea-wood
Where among boulders lifeless trees
Stuck rigid fingers to the breeze—
That stream of faint hot air that flits
Aimless at noon. 'Tis there she sits

HYPsipyle

Hour after hour, and as a dove
Croons when her breast is ripe for love,
So sings this exile, quiet, sad chants
Of love, yet knows not what she wants ;
And singing there in undertone,
Is one day answered by the moan
Of hidden mourner ; but no fear
Hath she for sound so true, though near ;
Nay, but sings out her elegy,
Which, like an echo, answers he.
Again she sings ; he suits her mood,
Nor breaks upon her solitude :
So she, choragus, calls the tune,
And as she leads he follows soon.
As bird with bird vies in the brake,
She sings no note he will not take—
As when she pleads, “ Ah, my lost love,
The night is dark thou art not of,”
Quick cometh answering the phrase,
“ O love, let all our nights be days ! ”
This, rapt, with beating heart, she heeds
And follows, “ Sweet love, my heart bleeds !
Come, stay the wound thyself didst give ” ;
Then he, “ I come to bid thee live.”
And so they carol, and her heart
Swells to believe his counterpart,
And strophé striketh clear, which he
Caps with his brave antistrophe ;
And as a maiden waxes bold,
And opens what should not be told
When all her auditory she sees
Within her mirror, so to trees
And rocks, and sullen sounding main
She empties all her passioned pain ;
And “ love, love, love,” her burden is,
And “ I am starving for thee,” his.
Moved, melted, all on fire she stands,
Holding abroad her quivering hands,
Raises her sweet eyes faint with tears
And dares to seek him whom she hears ;
And from her parted lips a sigh
Stealeth, as knowing he is nigh

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

And her fate on her—then she'd shun
That which she seeks ; but the thing's done.

Hollow-voiced, dim, spake her a shade,
"O thou that comest, nymph or maid—
If nymph, then maiden, since for aye
Virgin is immortality,
Nor love can change what Death cannot—
Look on me by love new-begot ;
Look on me, child new-born, nor start
To see my form who knowest my heart ;
For it is thine. O Mother and Wife,
Take then my love—thou gavest it life !"

So spake one close : to whom she lent
The wonder of her eyes' content—
That lucent gray, as if moonlight
Shone through a sapphire in the night—
And saw him faintly imaged, rare
As wisp of cloud on hillside bare,
A filamental form, a wraith
Shaped like that man who in the faith
Of one puts all his hope : who stood
Trembling in her near neighbourhood,
A thing of haunted eyes, of slim
And youthful seeming ; yet not dim,
Yet not unmanly in his fashion
Of speech, nor impotent of passion—
The which his tones gave earnest of
And his aspect of hopeless love ;
Who, drawing nearer, came to stand
So close beside her that one hand
Lit on her shoulder—yet no touch
She felt : "O maiden overmuch,"
He grieved, "O body far too sweet
For such as I, frail counterfeit
Of man, who yet was once a man,
Cut off before the midmost span
Of mortal life was but half run,
Or ere to love he had found one
Like thee—yet happy in that fate,
That waiting, he is fortunate :

HYPsipyle

For better far in Hell to fare
With thee than commerce elsewhere,
Sharing the snug and fat outlook
Of bed and board and ingle-nook
With earth-bound woman, earth-born child.
Nay, but high love is free and wild
And centreth not in mortal things ;
But to the soul giveth he wings,
And with the soul strikes partnership,
So may two let corruption slip
And breasting level, with far eyes
Lifted, seek haven in the skies,
Untrammel'd by the earthly mesh.
O thou," said he, " of fairy flesh
Immortal prisoner, take of me
Love ! 'tis my heritage in fee ;
For I am very part thereof,
And share the godhead."

So his love
Pled he with tones in love well-skilled
Which on her bosom beat and thrilled,
And pierced. No word nor look she had
To voice her heart, or sad or glad.
Rapt stood she, wooed by eager word
And by her need, whose cry she heard
Above his crying ; but she guessed
She was desired, beset, possessed
Already, handfasted to sight,
And yielding so, her heart she plight.

Thus was her mating : of the eyes
And ears, and her love half surmise,
Detected by her burning face
Which saw, not felt his fierce embrace.
For on her own she knew no hand
When caging it he seemed to stand,
And round her waist felt not the warm
Sheltered peace of the belting arm
She saw him clasp withal. When rained
His words upon her, or eyes strained
As though her inmost shrine to pierce
Where hid her heart of hearts, her ears

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Conceived, although her body sweet
Might never feel a young life beat
And leap within it. Ah, what cry
That mistress e'er heard poet sigh
Could voice thy beauty? Or what chant
Of music be thy ministrant?
Since thou art Music, poesy
Must both thy spouse and increase be!

In the hot dust, where lizards crouch
And pant, he made her bridal couch;
Thither down drew her to his side
And, phantom, taught her to be bride
With words so ardent, looks so hot
She needs must feel what she had not,
Guess herself in beleaguered bed
And throb response. Thus she was wed.
Love that with delicate tongues of fire
Can kindle hearts inflamed desire
In her for him who needed it;
And so she claimed and by eyes' wit
Had what she would: and now made war,
Being, as all sweet women are,
Prudes till Love calls them, and then fierce
In love's high calling. Thus with her ears
She fed on love, and to her eyes
Lent deeds of passionate emprise—
Till at the last, the shadowy strife
Ended, she owned herself all wife.

High mating of the mind! O love,
Since this must be, on this she throve!
Remember'd joy, Hypsipyle,
Since this must be, O love, let be!

Among my Books*

By Frederic Harrison

PART V

TRAGIC DRAMA

A FRIEND, much given to "first nights," who has dipped into some of the books I have been advising him to read, now says: "Won't you tell us something about Plays; do you not want us to read Shakespeare?" Well, of course, I am as much devoted to Shakespeare as Sir Sidney Lee himself, without pretending to any special knowledge of the older dramatists, much less to any research into the life and work of our own mighty poet. But I am not so garrulous as to discourse about Shakespeare, for our most learned students and our ablest critics have now told us everything about Shakespeare which Research and Criticism can discover—perhaps everything which ever will be known or can be judged as sound and true. Years ago, indeed, I was asked if I would write a *Life* of Shakespeare for a famous series, but I thought it would be quite presumptuous in me to undertake such a task. And it has been perfectly well achieved long since.

Of course, I have read my Shakespeare since I was a boy; and my father, who had heard Mrs. Siddons, the Kembles, and Edmund Kean in all the Plays then given on the stage, used to read to us Shakespeare of an evening as he had heard it played. As a young man, I carried the diamond Pickering edition in daily railway journeys to and from Lincoln's Inn. Now I have A. Treherne's miniature copies in good "Long Primer," hardly more than two inches square (Edinburgh, 1904). I find the "Arden" set (Methuen & Co.) very useful; and for general use I want nothing handier than the twelve volume set small d° (issued by Constable & Co., N.D.).

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